

Code of Practice for Periodic Review

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Summary/Description:

Periodic reviews of taught programmes are conducted by panels endorsed by the Taught Courses Committee, and reporting to the Academic Board. The review team is chaired by the Chair (or Deputy Chair) of the Examination Board. Reviews focus on the way in which the Programme Management Team manages the quality of the provision and maintains the standards of the award. Reviews are held on a five-yearly cycle, timings approved by Academic Board. The review is in addition to standard annual monitoring processes, as set out in the Annual Monitoring Policy and Guidelines and is a more substantial process than annual monitoring, with a wider range of inputs and is one of the ICR's key quality management and enhancement processes.

1.INTRODUCTION

1.1. This code of practice governs the periodic review of taught subjects delivered by the ICR irrespective of location of delivery. This code seeks to ensure that academic provision is subject to effective scrutiny and self-reflection by Programme Management Teams with the emphasis on constructive feedback from peers in a way which promotes the enhancement of the student learning experience and of quality systems. It also addresses the way in which Programme Management Teams ensure the accuracy of information they provide about their programme(s).

1.2. This approach demonstrates the ICRs commitment to assuring the quality of its taught programmes and maintaining the standard of awards.

1.3. The review should:

- Be an in-depth evidence-based evaluation of the quality and standards of a programme;
- Have flexible parameters to ensure relevance to the programme(s) involved;
- Monitor the cumulative impact of small / incremental changes and
- Be more than simply confirming the sufficiency of current provision, it should provide constructive recommendations on the future enhancement of this provision.

1.4. All programmes will be reviewed every 5 years through Review Teams established for the purpose in accordance with this code and in accordance with the schedule approved by the Academic Board. The Registry is responsible for keeping a record of all periodic reviews and informing Programme Directors when a periodic review should take place.

2. STAGES OF THE REVIEW

Reviews will consist of the following stages:

- A Preliminary meeting between Registry and the Programme Directors to agree a date for the review.
- A Self-Evaluation Document (SED) coordinated by the Head of Registry Operations to be submitted to the Secretary of the Review Team **no later than four weeks before the review.**
- A preliminary reading of review documentation including the SED coordinated by the Secretary of the Review Team.
- A briefing meeting of the internal Review Team members **no later than two weeks** before the review to identify issues, omissions and to evolve a list of questions for the review drawing on the SED and preliminary scrutiny of review documents.
- The Review Day itself which will involve meetings between the Review Team and staff and students involved in the programme. Oral feedback will be provided by the Review Team to the Programme Directors at the end of the day and a short summary will be provided in writing within **3 working days** from the review.
- A report drafted by the Secretary and approved by the members of the Review Team (First Draft) for comment on factual accuracy will be provided to the Programme Directors no more than **6 weeks** after the review day.
- The final report will be considered by the Taught Courses Committee (TCC) and an action plan agreed based on the recommendations of the Review Team.
- Academic Board should formally consider the report and approve recommended actions.
- Feedback to students on the outcomes of the review and action plan should occur through the Student Liaison Committee (SLC); a summary of the review report and action plan should be published via the VLE to ensure accessibility to students.

3. THE PROCESS OF REVIEW

3.1. The Assistant Director (Education, Policy and Quality) is responsible for ensuring that a schedule of periodic reviews is maintained and approved by Academic Board. Any request to vary the schedule must be approved by Academic Board.

3.2. No later than the start of the academic year the The Assistant Director (Education, Policy and Quality) will write to the Programme Directors for the programme(s) scheduled to be reviewed in that year confirming that the review will take place and inviting the Programme Directors to identify preferred dates for conducting the review. In addition to taking account of the various stages of the process, the choice of dates must enable a sufficiently representative number of current students to meet with the Review Team during the review day. The Programme Directors will also be invited to nominate a potential external member for the Review Team.

3.3. Membership of the Review Team – Review Teams must include the following:

- Chair of the Examination Board (or Deputy Chair)
- External Reviewer
- Internal Reviewer (member of faculty who is not a module leader, member of the programme team or otherwise closely associated with the programme)
- Student Representative
- Quality Assurance (Registry)/Secretary to the Review Team
- Programme Director (advisory role)

3.4. Membership of the Review Team should be established as follows:

- The Chair of the Exam Board and Programme Director(s) should take the lead to identify and invite an academic to participate as Internal Reviewer.
- The Student President, with advice from Registry, should nominate the student representative.
- The External Reviewer must be appointed as follows:
 - The Programme Directors will be asked to nominate at least two potential candidates experienced in the discipline, with expertise and experience so that s/he can make a judgement of the validity and relevance of the programme.
 - The External Reviewer must not be a current or recent (last 3 years) external examiner of the programme.
 - The Head of Registry Operations will contact the nominee informally to ascertain his/her willingness to participate in the review.
 - The External Reviewer will be paid a fee of £500 per day plus expenses.
 - The Secretary of the Review Team is responsible for formally contacting the external nominee to invite him/her to become a member of the Review Team.

3.5. Preliminary meeting

The purpose of the meeting is to ensure that the following is agreed:

- The date of the review
- Any specific logistical issues, including venue for the review
- Confirmation of documentation to be provided with the SED
- Housekeeping responsibilities and schedule.

The Chair of TCC is the final arbiter of any unresolved issues.

3.6. Student involvement

It is recommended that the SED is informed by both current and alumni students. Current students will be given guidance by Registry in the process and preparation for review; guidance will cover the following:

- Involvement in writing the SED
- Meeting the Review Team and the overall process
- How they will be informed of the outcome of the review
- Involvement in the development and monitoring of the action plan

3.7. Self-Evaluation Document

The purpose of the SED is to present the Programme Team's evaluation of the way in which the ICR assures and enhances the quality of the learning opportunities provided and maintains academic standards. The SED also provides an evaluation of how the ICR ensures the accuracy of information about the programme. The SED should build on existing processes of evaluation i.e. student feedback, annual monitoring, external examiner reports, and any previous periodic or other review.

The Review Team will use the SED to assess how the programme reflects external reference points (such as the FHEQ, QAA UK Quality Code), ICR regulations and codes of practice and how this reflection impacts on the student learning experience and the maintenance of academic standards.

The SED should provide evaluation of both strengths/areas of good practice and areas for development and is based on a link between each of the main headings:

- Introduction (including the previous periodic review)
- Intended Learning Outcomes – the ways in which they support the educational aims
- Curriculum and assessment – how these support the achievement of the intended learning outcomes; how the Programme Management Team ensure the continued 'validity and relevance' of the curricula, and how it communicates the curricula to students
- Quality of learning opportunities:
 - Learning and teaching
 - Student admission, progression and achievement – including analysis of data
 - Learning resources
- Maintenance of academic standards
- Assurance and enhancement of quality
- Accuracy and completeness of published information.

There is no word limit for the SED but programme teams may wish to consider a 5000 word guide.

3.8. Supporting Documentation

A list of supporting documentation required for the review is included in the SED template (p. 4).

The programme specification and External Examiner Reports for the last 3 years (including any action reports) should be appended to the SED and submitted to the Review Team Secretary no later than **4 weeks** before the review date.

The remaining supporting documentation detailed at p.4 of the SED template should be submitted to the Review Team Secretary **2 weeks** prior to the review date.

3.9. Briefing Meeting

The briefing meeting must be held no fewer than two weeks before the review. All internal members of the Review Team will be expected to attend, the external member will be invited (by the Secretary) but not expected to attend.

The purpose of the meeting is to enable the Review Team to discuss the process of the review and identify the main issues they wish to pursue at each stage of the review. This meeting will also provide an opportunity to identify any gaps in the information provided. The Review Team will also agree the final timetable for the review meetings (see para. 3.11 Review Day)

Following the briefing meeting the Secretary should provide the programme team with an indication of the lines of enquiry the Review Team is likely to follow and indicate any additional information required.

3.10. Preliminary Reading

The Secretary of the Review Team must coordinate member of the Review Team in carrying out preliminary reading of the supporting documentation. The purposes of this are to:

- Identify possible issues for discussion during the review meetings – this does not involve making judgements about such issues.
- Monitor the way in which regulations and codes of practice have been implemented.
- Monitor the accuracy of information provided to students (including handbooks and programme specifications)
- Identify any additional information which may better inform the Review Team.

3.11. Review Day

The precise format for the day will be agreed between the Review Team and the programme team lead but should be based around the following model:

1. Private meeting of the Review Team (45 minutes)
2. Meeting with key programme team members (30-45 minutes)
3. Meeting with tutors (30-45 minutes)
4. Review Team lunch (30 minutes)
5. Meeting with students (45-60 minutes)
6. Private meeting of the Review Team (30 minutes)
7. Follow-up meeting with key programme team members (30 minutes)
8. Private meeting of the Review Team (30 minutes)
9. Oral feedback to key programme team members (15 minutes)

Meeting with tutors/programme team

Wherever possible an overlap between the key programme team and tutor meetings should be avoided. The 'Follow-up' meeting with key programme team members will normally be held to address any outstanding issues or issues arising from the meetings with tutors and students.

Meeting with students

The Programme Management Team should provide a list of students expected to attend the meeting and their designation (year of study, mode of attendance, qualification aim) no later than the morning of the review day.

Students must be provided with a copy of the Student Information leaflet explaining the purpose and process of the review (Annexe B).

Review Team meetings

The review day will include private meetings of the Review Team and the Chair will provide oral feedback to the Programme Directors and other staff nominated by the Directors at the end of the day. The feedback will provide an indicative list of strengths/areas of good practice and recommendations, but does not preclude other issues being included in the report.

3.12. Initial feedback

Within 3 working days of the review day the Secretary should provide the Programme Management Team with a short note confirming the Review Team's initial feedback. The note will be agreed with the Chair of the Review Team.

3.13. Review questions/issues

Guidance for the review team on the kind of questions which should inform the meetings is provided in Annexe C (Review Team Guidance).

3.14. Periodic review report

Each review will result in a report which will be drafted by the Secretary and be agreed by the Review Team. The Secretary will make a record of each of the meetings and discussions of the Review Team as a basis for drafting the report, and be guided by the Review Team summary of strengths/areas of good practice and recommendations as agreed during the day and provided as feedback to the programme directors at the end of the day.

3.15. Report schedule

The report will be completed according to the schedule set out below ensuring that the draft report is made available to the Programme Directors no more than 4 weeks after the review day and the final report is ready for consideration by Academic Board at the last meeting of the academic year.

The schedule for production of the report is as follows:

Periodic review day +

1 week	Draft version 1.0 produced by Secretary and circulated to Review Team	Review Team given 2 weeks to comment, Secretary 1 week to incorporate comments
4 weeks	Draft version 1.01 sent to Programme Management Team for comment on factual accuracy	Programme Management Team given 2 weeks to make comments, Secretary given 1 week to incorporate comments.
7 weeks	Draft version 1.02	1 week for final checking and approval by the Chair of the Review Team.
8 weeks	Final report – version 2.00	

3.16. Format of the report

The report will be constructed around the headings in the SED template and will reflect the areas of enquiry which will have been used by the Review Team to stimulate discussion in each of the sessions. The evidence gained during the sessions with staff and students will be drawn together under these headings, coupled with the views of the Review Team and drawing on the supporting documentation where appropriate.

The first section of the report will contain recommendations to the Programme Management Team (classified if deemed necessary as 'high' priority), examples of strengths and good practice noted in the review and, where appropriate, recommendations to Academic Board. The recommendations in the report will be incorporated as action points in the periodic review action plan and approved as part of the report.

The report will include specific comments on the effectiveness with which the:

- Programme Management Team is ensuring the 'relevance and validity' of the programme; this section of the report must include the external reviewer's judgement of the validity and relevance of the programme.
- Programme Management Team ensures the accuracy and completeness of published information and the views of students regarding accuracy and completeness.

The whole of the Review Team is responsible for the content of the report, including ensuring that the findings (strengths and recommendations) are founded on appropriate evidence (including discussion during the review day). The Chair of the Panel is the final arbiter in the event of any disagreement.

3.17. Distribution of the report

As indicated in the table above, the Programme Management Team will receive draft version 1.0 of the report for comment on the factual accuracy of the report. This is not an opportunity to query the findings of the report. The Chair of the Review Panel will be the final arbiter of whether changes should be made to the report based on the programme team's comments.

3.18. Action Plan

The Programme Management Team must produce the action plan using the template specified at Annexe D for approval by Academic Board at the same time as the report. The action plan will address each of the recommendations set out in the report and progress will be monitored by the Taught Courses Committee and reported to Academic Board annually.

3.19. Publication of report summary and action plan

The Secretary of the Review Team will ensure that following approval by Academic Board the summary of the report (Annexe E) and the action plan are published to the VLE to be accessible to all students.

3.20. Feedback to Students

Following receipt of the final version of the report the Programme Management Team must make appropriate arrangements for providing feedback to students on the outcomes of the review. This must at least include making students aware of the location on the VLE of the published summary and action plan.

Feedback should include discussion of the outcomes of the review with the SLC.

4.ANNEXES

4.1. Annexe A - Self-Evaluation Document

Download ( [Policy Review Annexe A SED Template.pdf](#) /  [Policy Review Annexe A SED Template.docx](#))

4.2. Annexe B - Information for student participants

Introduction

You will have been given a copy of this leaflet by your Programme Management Team because you have been invited to participate in their Periodic Review. Your involvement in this process is valued as an effective way of you telling the ICR about your learning experience, and helping us to continue to improve the learning experience of all our students.

This leaflet has been written by the Registry and we welcome your feedback on whether it has helped you understand the process of periodic review and your role in it.

The purpose of Periodic Reviews

A Periodic Review is carried out on an ICR taught programme of study every five years. The purpose of the review is to consider the way in which your programme team **assures the quality** of the programme and **maintains the standard** of the University of London award (i.e. degree, diploma, or certificate). This means looking at how the programme team make sure that what you are being taught and assessed is suitable for the programme you are studying, that you are being provided with appropriate facilities to help you learn, that you receive the support which matches your needs, and that the procedures for examining and deciding progression and degree classification are fair and rigorous. It is also concerned with the opportunities you are provided with to be consulted by, and give feedback to, the programme team.

The review is not to tell the programme team 'how to do its job', but to help it evaluate what it does, drawing on the experience of academic staff from elsewhere in the ICR and from outside.

The review does not involve any kind of grading of the programme, programme team or of individual staff but rather identifies examples of good practice and also areas to develop further.

Who conducts reviews?

A **Review Team** is appointed to carry out each review. The Review Team is led by the Chair of the Examination Board (or Deputy Chair) and normally includes a member of academic staff not involved with your programme; an external reviewer nominated by the programme team who has expertise in the subject discipline; a member of the Registry team who acts as Secretary to the

Review Team and Quality Assurance advisor and a Course Director acting in an advisory capacity. The Review Team also includes a student representative.

Stages of the review

The review takes place in a number of stages:

1. The Programme Directors are required to write a **Self-Evaluation Document (SED)** analysing the way quality is assured and academic standards are maintained, identifying the programme's strengths and areas for development. It is expected that students are involved in preparing the SED, for example students should be asked to comment on a draft version.
2. The Review Team reads through documents supplied by the programme team, including staff/student liaison committee minutes and student handbooks, to identify possible items for discussion with the programme team and examples of good practice. (The Review Team does not look at student work, nor does it observe teaching).
3. The Review Team holds a full day of meetings with a range of staff from the programme team and a representative sample of students.
4. At the end of the day the Review Team provides verbal feedback to the programme team.
5. The Review Team writes a detailed report, which includes recommendations and examples of good practice. This report is submitted in the first instance to the Taught Courses Committee which will consider the report and recommend it for approval to the Academic Board.

Your role

The Review Team wants to meet with a 'representative sample' of students. Experience has shown that this is one of the most valuable ways of learning about students' actual experiences. The meeting will normally last up to 60 minutes. Members of the Review Team will want to ask you a range of questions such as:

- Why you chose to come to the ICR?
- Why you chose your particular programme of study?
- Did you find the induction process helpful?
- What is your experience of Personal Development Planning (PDP)?
- Where do you go for help if you have a problem?
- Are your views as a student listened to?
- Are handbooks helpful, accurate and complete?
- How are you made aware of the intended learning outcomes of your programme?
- Do you understand what is meant by the term plagiarism and how to avoid it?
- How do you know what you have to achieve to pass a module or earn an overall merit or distinction for the degree?
- What use is made by your tutors of the Virtual Learning Environment?
- Do you get helpful feedback on your assessed work?

The meeting will be conducted in as informal and friendly way as possible. It is not an interview, and you will find that the Review Team are genuinely interested in your views. They want to hear both the not so good and the good parts of your experience. Nothing you say will be quoted in the final report, nor will you be identified in the report or be identified in any way to the programme team. It is important that you feel confident that you are free to speak openly and honestly at the meeting in a way which will help the Review Team understand your experience of your programme of study.

The Report

As indicated above, a report is produced at the end of the process by the Review Team and approved by the Academic Board. The programme team is required to produce an action plan setting out how, and by when, it will address the recommendations set out in the Report. A summary of the final Report and the action plan will be published on the VLE. You can expect the programme team to discuss the outcomes of the Review with student representatives, for example at staff/student liaison committee meetings.

Feedback

You are encouraged to provide feedback to the Registry both on this leaflet (for example, did you find it helpful and accurate?) Please send feedback to the Assistant Director of Academic Services (Education Policy and Quality (email: amy.moore@icr.ac.uk).

4.3. Annexe C - Guidance for Members of Review Teams

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The purpose of this Annexe is to provide guidance to members of Review Teams on the issues which should be addressed during the process of periodic review. To ensure that the objectives of periodic review are achieved in a consistent manner it is important that the key areas are covered during the review (SED, preliminary reading, review day and report). This does not mean that every question has to be asked at every meeting. The Review Team needs to exercise judgement based on what is included/not included in the SED, what can be found in the additional documentation, what emerges during the review meetings, the nature of the programme being delivered and the programme team delivering it. For example, the meeting with students may identify issues which had not been identified from the SED or the documentation but which need to be pursued with the programme team/tutors.

1.2. It is the responsibility of the Chair, supported by the secretary, to achieve a balance between coverage of the issues and flexibly responding to issues that arise during the review day. The **briefing meeting** is therefore important in planning how the Review Team will conduct the meetings with programme team/tutors and students (see **3** for possible questions for the meeting with students). The external reviewer will not normally be able to attend this meeting but their comments will be invited in advance. As far as possible during the briefing meeting, the Review Team should agree specific areas which they will pursue during the review day (e.g. relating to the main sections of the SED), but the Review Team will have further opportunity at the beginning of the review day – and therefore with the external reviewer present – to refine this before conducting the meetings.

1.3. Review Team members should remember that much of the value of the review lies in the feedback which is provided to the programme team both in the form of recommendations for further development and identification of strengths and good practice. Recommendations and good practice examples must be based on evidence (provided through any of the sources – SED, other documents, meetings with programme team/tutors and students – preferably corroborated). The report will indicate the evidential basis for any recommendation.

1.4. The distinction between 'strengths' and 'good practice' is such that the former is applicable to something which is worthy of commendation but is not readily transferable. Examples of good practice can inform the development of policy and procedure at an institutional level and therefore be applied in the delivery of other taught provision.

1.5. The following provides examples of the kind of evaluation which Review Team members should be seeking to make when reading the SED, additional documentation and when meeting the programme team/tutors and students. The headings reflect the headings in the SED template which the Programme Directors are required to use. The final report will be based on these headings.

1.6. In broad terms sections 2-4 are concerned with the quality of student learning opportunities, section 5 with the maintenance of academic standards, and section 6 with the assurance and enhancement of quality.

1.7. Review Teams must pay particular attention to four 'significant elements'

1.7.1. Curriculum: reflecting up-to-date views of what is appropriate,

1.7.2. Alignment of learning outcomes and assessment strategies: module learning outcomes should align with programme learning outcomes and with assessment strategies and reflect up-to-date external and internal expectations,

1.7.3. Learning resources: teaching staff and physical resources must remain appropriate to support the curriculum,

1.7.4. Published information: published information including programme and module specifications must accurately reflect the approved and delivered version of the programme and modules.

1.8. Some programmes are accredited by professional or statutory bodies. Where this is the case reviews should take into account the implications of those professional/statutory requirements recognising that external and 'academic' requirements have to be satisfied.

1.9. The scope of the review should have been agreed with the programme management team at the preliminary meeting.

2. ISSUES FOR EVALUATION

Section 1 - Introduction

This section of the SED should explain how it has been produced, including the extent and manner of student input. The section should also include an evaluation of the actions taken in response to the previous periodic review including their impact on academic standards or the quality of the student learning experience.

Evaluate:

- The way the SED was produced, including involvement of students and staff
- The response to the previous periodic review, especially evidence of a positive impact on standards and/or learning opportunities

Section 2 – Learning Outcomes

The focus of this section is the extent to which the intended learning outcomes for the programme have been developed taking into account relevant reference points e.g. the FHEQ, Subject Benchmark Statements etc. Reference should be made to the link between programme outcomes and the outcomes of the individual modules comprising the programme.

Evaluate:

The processes through which learning outcomes are set and reviewed, including the way in which these processes ensure that account is taken of relevant reference points

- The extent to which module learning outcomes support the achievement of the programme outcomes, and therefore demonstrates the coherency of the programme
- The extent to which, and process through which, students are informed of the learning outcomes
- The extent to which learning outcomes suggest that they have been regularly updated to ensure that they are valid and relevant
- The extent to which students are involved in programme development, such as the setting of learning outcomes

Section 3 – Curriculum and Assessment

This section is concerned with the way the content of the programme enables students to achieve the learning outcomes, the way the assessment strategies enable them to demonstrate that achievement, and together the way in which they determine the academic level of the award. It must also include consideration of the effectiveness of the processes for ensuring that the programme is 'valid and relevant'. The External Reviewer is required to confirm that the programme reflects up-to-date subject knowledge and discipline specific skills and that learning outcomes remain aligned (programme-module-assessment).

Evaluate:

Curriculum: The means employed to ensure the curriculum enables students to achieve the learning outcomes (in terms of acquiring knowledge and skills whether subject specific or transferable), with reference to the processes for designing and organising the curriculum, and securing academic and intellectual progression.

- The extent to which the currency of the curriculum is maintained with reference to developments in the specific discipline (academic and professional) and developments in learning and teaching
- The extent to which students, external examiners, professional and statutory bodies, graduates, employers and other 'stakeholders' have an opportunity to contribute to the development of the curriculum

Assessment: The extent to which the assessment requirements of the programme are designed to demonstrate the achievement of the intended learning outcomes (module and then programme level). Evidence should show that learning outcomes are being assessed and that the method is appropriate to the type of outcome

- The extent to which there are opportunities for formative assessment (including the effectiveness of the feedback provided)
- The processes through which appropriate assessment strategies are devised with reference to the standard of the award
- The processes through which assessments are designed to address the needs of students who possess different protected characteristics (identified by the Equality Act, 2010) to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their achievement
- The effectiveness of the assessment criteria
- The processes through which students are informed of assessment requirements, including assessment criteria and procedures for giving feedback to students on their performance.
- The way curriculum and assessment together determine the level of the award to which the programme leads.

NB: the effectiveness of feedback to students on assessments in order to support student learning is addressed under section 4 – learning and teaching, below.

Section 4 – Quality of learning opportunities

Three areas combine to enable an evaluation of the quality of the student learning opportunities provided by the programme: learning and teaching, student progression and achievement, and learning resources.

Learning and teaching

This section is concerned with the effectiveness of learning and teaching in delivering the curriculum and supporting the achievement of intended learning outcomes. Periodic review is not concerned with specific teaching performance (thus there is no teaching observation for example), but with the strategies adopted by and the implementation of those strategies.

The section should include consideration of arrangements for providing students with feedback on formatively and summatively assessed work (irrespective of the format of assessment) and the effectiveness of that feedback to support student learning. (Feedback from students is addressed under section 6 – assurance and enhancement of quality).

Evaluate:

- The processes through which the programme team develops and reviews its learning and teaching strategies including taking account of the ICR Learning and Teaching Strategy, current thinking in learning and teaching, examples of good practice, the nature of the discipline(s), the nature and diversity of students
- The way teaching staff utilise their expertise based on their research, scholarship or professional activity
- The extent to which (module-specific) learning and teaching strategies support the achievement of learning outcomes (knowledge and skills)
- Examples of, and evidence of a systematic approach to, enhancing the practice of learning and teaching.

Student admission, progression and achievement

This section is not concerned with broader issues of recruitment (such as intake targets and their achievement), but is concerned with the student learning experience (e.g. resources, teaching methods), how prospective students are made aware of the demands and opportunities the programme provides, and how the programme team recognises and supports the full range of students admitted (taking account of age, gender, background, disability etc).

Progression is concerned with the processes for supporting students both academically (including monitoring their academic progress through the programme) and personally, from initial application through induction to completion.

Evaluate:

- The processes through which the admission of students ensures that students are treated fairly, and properly and accurately informed of the demands and opportunities offered by the programme
- The way the range of students admitted informs strategies.
- The strategies developed for inducting and supporting all students academically and personally, including progress monitoring.
- The way students are informed about the opportunities for support, and their ability to access those opportunities
- The way data on student achievement is used to inform support and related strategies.

Learning resources (human and material)

This is concerned both with human and material resources which support learning and teaching and therefore the achievement of the learning outcomes. Human resources should focus on how the Programme Management Team assures the quality of the teaching and support provided by staff (academic and non-academic). It is not concerned with assessing the competence of staff but with the processes operated by the department (such as induction, peer observation, staff development, and appraisal).

Material resources focuses on any form of resource provided for learning and teaching, including library and computing, study facilities, lecture theatres, laboratories etc. Attention should be paid to strategies for ensuring that resources are appropriate to support learning and teaching and are effectively deployed.

Reviews do not normally include tours of departmental facilities but Review Teams may request a tour where they feel this would be valuable to their understanding of the issues relevant to the review.

Evaluate:

- The mechanisms used to decide the appropriate deployment of staff to deliver and support the programme.
- The mechanisms through which the Programme Management Team assures itself of the quality of teaching with particular attention to the range of staff (e.g. experience, level of responsibility, teaching and non-teaching commitments)
- The way the Programme Management Team enhances the quality of teaching and support (e.g. staff development activity, dissemination of good practice)
- The means used to match other learning resources to the programme and students.

Section 5 - Maintenance of academic standards

This section is concerned with the way academic standards are maintained. Attention should focus on the processes for setting standards (in terms of what students are required to achieve to gain the award), and in determining students' achievement (the process of assessing, determining marks, progression and degree classification). It should address how the Management Team meets ICR expectations to ensure the integrity of the whole assessment process, including the conduct of examiners and examination boards, anonymous marking, dispensations granted to students for example due to extenuating circumstances, procedures to prevent or detect plagiarism and other academic misconduct, and the involvement of external examiners.

Evaluate:

- The procedures through which the Programme Management Team protects the integrity of the examining/assessment process, from the setting of assessments to the meetings of boards of examiners and the prevention and detection of academic misconduct.
- The rigour with which the Programme Management Team uses external examiners in accordance with ICR and external expectations, including at boards of examiners and in responding to external examiners' annual reports
- The procedures through which the Programme Management Team considers non-standard cases such as extensions and extenuating circumstances to ensure fairness to all students

Section 6 – Assurance and enhancement of quality

The focus of this section is on the processes for assuring and enhancing quality, both the student learning experience and quality systems. This includes the obtaining and responding to student feedback, opportunities for student representation and involvement in decision-making related to the programme, the annual monitoring of the programme, and the provision of information to students. Feedback should take account of responses to externally-provided information, principally the PTES.

The Programme Management Team is required to make available to student representatives copies of external examiners' reports. This section should include consideration of the effectiveness of this process.

Evaluate:

- The processes through which the Programme Management Team assures the quality of the programme, including the way in which it communicates with students and provides opportunities for student input directly or via representatives
- The extent to which the programme team critically evaluates the programme and demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement; for example through action planning.
- The steps the Programme Management Team is taking to respond to the ICR Learning and Teaching Strategy
- The effectiveness of how the Programme Team handle student complaints.
- The effectiveness of providing information to students about their rights and obligations, including student handbooks, information about complaints, appeals, academic misconduct, extenuating circumstances etc
- The effectiveness of the process for sharing external examiners' reports with students

Section 8 – Accuracy and completeness of published information

The Programme Management Team are responsible for ensuring the accuracy and completeness of information produced about the programme, whether published for external purposes or provided internally to students. The review should consider the way the Programme Team assures the accuracy of this information, and seeks to enhance the quality of it (such as its user-friendliness), for example in response to student feedback.

Published programme information (such as programme and module specifications) forms part of the contract with each student, and therefore it is essential that information is up-to-date, valid and relevant, and that the Programme Management Team operates sound processes to ensure this.

The Review Team's report MUST include a specific comment, reflecting their evaluation, of the effectiveness with which accuracy of published information is ensured.

Evaluate:

- The mechanisms through which accuracy of information is assured for both internal and external audiences; and how the Programme Team seeks to enhance the quality of information provided (e.g. its user-friendliness)
- To what extent students/representatives are consulted for example on departmental/module handbooks, web pages, information provided through the Virtual Learning Environment or other media

3. MEETING WITH STUDENTS

This section provides guidance to members of review teams for conducting meetings with students. It suggests the kind of questions which the review team might ask. The final selection of questions will of course be determined by the issues that have arisen during the review and the suggestions below should therefore not be regarded as a list which must be worked through during meetings.

It is the responsibility of the chair, supported by the secretary, to ensure that meetings are conducted in a manner which is supportive, as informal as appropriate given the importance of the review, and encourages students to be open and constructive. Students should have been provided with a copy of the 'Student Information Leaflet' explaining the process and their role in it by the Programme Management Team (see annexe B).

Meeting with students is central to the process of review as they provide an opportunity to establish student views on the issues being considered. The meeting provides an opportunity not only to hear the direct views of those present, but also to establish more generally whether there are effective arrangements for student feedback and representation. Discussions should be conducted as far as possible avoiding jargon and recognising that students may be apprehensive about meeting the team.

The chair should be aware of the need to ensure that views are as representative as possible, including making sure that one or two students do not dominate discussions, and making sure as far as possible that views/experiences which might not be the norm are evaluated on that basis.

Introductions

The chair should:

- Introduce him/herself and reinforce the purpose of the review process (also making clear that the team have looked at documents such as student liaison committee (SLC) minutes); s/he should make clear that this is part of the ongoing process through which programmes are reviewed on a five yearly basis
- Make clear to students that what they say during the meeting will not be attributed to them in the report or otherwise
- Invite each member of the team to introduce him/herself in turn
- Try to establish how the students were selected to attend the meeting, confirm whether they received the leaflet (annexe B) and ask if they found it useful
- Ask if students were involved in any way in writing the Self-Evaluation Document and whether they have received a copy of it
- Ask students what attracted them to studying at the ICR and whether their experience so far is living up to expectations.

Representation and feedback

- How are student views sought?
- How are students made aware of action taken in response to their feedback?
- How does the SLC committee(s) work?
- Have student representatives received training? Was it helpful?
- Do students feel effectively represented on SLCs? How do they see their role?
- How effective is student representation? Can they provide examples?
- Are there any case studies where a change has been instigated in response to students' views?
- How are the outcomes of the Postgraduate Taught Student Experience Survey used to enhance learning opportunities for students?
- Are their views sought on specific issues such as student handbooks, induction?
- How are students involved in the design/development of the programme?
- Are students aware of the Student Charter?

Information for students (including accuracy)

- How user-friendly and up-to-date is the website/information provided to students?
- Have students received handbooks: programme and/or module? In paper-form, on-line or both?
- Do they find them helpful, accurate and complete?
- Did they find the information provided before they came to the ICR (e.g. before applying, and after their place was confirmed) helpful and accurate?
- How do students find out about complaints and appeals procedures?

Intended learning outcomes

- Are students made aware of the intended learning outcomes by programme specifications or other means?
- Do students feel that the content of the programme helps them to achieve the intended learning outcomes?
- Do they feel that the content and learning outcomes are relevant to further study and career development?
- Are timetables and workloads appropriate in enabling them to study?

Learning and teaching

- Does the range of teaching methods enable students to learn effectively?
- Are they appropriate to the curriculum (e.g. teaching of skills/knowledge)?
- What use is made of the VLE, e.g. for providing information, lectures notes, teaching or assessment?
- If applicable, how is employability embedded in the curriculum for students?

Assessment and progression

- Do students understand what they are required to do and how work will be marked?
- Do students feel that their assessments are appropriate?
- Do they understand marking criteria?
- Do they understand what they need to do to progress and how their degree is classified (e.g. pass, merit and distinction)?
- Are students clear on what happens if they fail an assessment?
- Are there opportunities for formative as well as summative feedback
- Is feedback provided in each case? Is it prompt, clear and informative?
- Is feedback provided for all types of assessment task?
- Do tutors discuss progress with individual students?
- Are students given clear advice on referencing – do they understand plagiarism, how to avoid it and why it matters?
- Have student representatives been provided with copies of external examiners' reports, or been advised of how the reports will be made available to them?

Student support

- Did students find admission and induction procedures helpful?
- If applicable, what is their experience of Personal Development Planning?
- Where do students go if they need help/advice on academic and personal matters?
- Do students know what to do if they miss an assessment deadline or cannot submit assessed work on time?
- How satisfied are international students with student support? (if applicable)

Learning resources (staff)

- Do students feel that teaching staff are fully trained and qualified?
- Have students had the opportunity to feed back on lectures?
- Do students see evidence of a link between research undertaken by lecturers and the content of the modules?

Learning resources (material)

- Are library and computing facilities adequate to meet students needs (e.g. opening hours, accessibility, technical support)
- What resources are provided?
- Were students provided with appropriate induction relating to resources at the start of the programme?

General issues for discussion

- Have students any suggestions for the way their learning opportunities could be improved?
- What do they view as the best and worst aspect of their student learning experience?

Outcomes of the review

- The chair may wish to ask students if they are aware of what feedback they will receive following the review (such as receiving a summary of the report and be involved – perhaps through the SLC – in discussing the action plan).

4.4. Annexe D - Periodic Review Action Plan

Download ( [Policy Review Annexe D Action Plan Template.pdf](#) /  [Policy Review Annexe D Action Plan Template.docx](#))

4.5. Annexe E - Periodic Review Summary

Download ( [Policy Review Annexe E Review Summary.pdf](#) /  [Policy Review Annexe E Review Summary.docx](#))